

Slater Memorial Museum  
108 Crescent Street, Norwich Free Academy  
Norwich  
New London County  
Connecticut

HABS No. CONN-251

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## SLATER MEMORIAL MUSEUM

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Address: 108 Crescent Street, Norwich Free Academy,  
Norwich, New London County, Connecticut.

Present Owner Norwich Free Academy  
and Occupant:

Present Use: Museum, classroom, and office building.

Brief Statement This large masonry building, built in 1886, is  
of Significance: characteristic of the period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Norwich Free Academy.
2. Date of erection: Dedicated November 4, 1886.
3. Architect, builder: Stephen C. Earle, (1839-1913), F.A.I.A., of Worcester, Massachusetts.  
Flint Building and Construction Company, Worcester, Massachusetts. Cost: \$150,000.
4. Original plans: No copies of the original plans at the Slater Memorial Museum.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: The Converse Gallery has been added to the rear to provide exhibition space. The gallery measures 59' x 60'-11".
6. Sources of information: John Putnam Gulliver and Daniel Coit Gilman, Addresses Delivered at the Dedication of the Slater Memorial Building at Norwich, Connecticut, Thursday, November 4, 1886 (Cambridge: University Press, 1887).  
The American Architect and Building News, 1886.  
For Stephen C. Earle, Architect see: Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 186-187.

Prepared by Mrs. Ozias Dodge, Director  
Slater Memorial Museum  
Norwich Free Academy  
Norwich, Connecticut  
November 1958.

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Built in 1886, this is a large Richardsonian, masonry building characteristic of the period.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: This a large rectangular building, two-and-a-half stories high, facing west, with a tall tower on the northwest corner and an entrance porch on the southwest corner.
2. Foundations: Monson granite laid in a regular ashlar pattern.
3. Wall construction: Brick with Portland, Connecticut, sandstone trim used for quoining, belt courses, window and door frames, eaves, and parapets. Exterior tile trim includes: 6" x 6" tiles with patterned faces and 24" x 30" tile panels with foliated ornament.
4. Porches: There is a large entrance porch in the southwest corner with two round-headed entrances with Romanesque Revival trim and iron gates.
5. Chimneys: Four.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Three entrances to the building. Two two-leaf entrance doors with semi-circular top lights of small leaded panes. Each leaf 3'-10" x 7'-4", made up of 8 panels. One single leaf door, 4'-10" x 8'-8", made up of 15 panels, with a top light.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Total of 150 windows: mostly double hung windows of various sizes with interior shutters; also some casement windows, some with small leaded panes; also some semi-circular, some triangular windows.
7. Roof
  - a. Shape, covering: Hipped roof over the main block of the building, intersected by several large gables; covered with slate.

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b. Cornice: Stone cornice with large scale dentil course.

c. Dormers: Six eyebrow dormers.

8. Tower: The tower at the northwest corner of the building becomes round above the eave line, and rises much higher than the main roof, with a tall, arcaded, lighted top story, a steeply pitched conical roof, and a weather vane marked "SM".

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: The first floor contains a large entrance and stair hall, two lecture or reception rooms, and offices. The second floor contains offices and a high central exhibit room, 60' x 90', with a gallery around four sides.
2. Stairways: Six hardwood stairways. The main stairway in the entrance hall is an open string, open newel, U-shaped stair, with square newel posts, molded wood hand-rail, and wrought iron balusters.
3. Flooring: The original flooring is hardwood and ceramic tile. There is also some modern asphalt tile flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Hardwood ceilings with exposed trusses and beams in the main exhibition gallery. Brick walls with Portland, Connecticut, sandstone and marble wainscoting and trim.
5. Doorways and doors: Paneled cherry doors.
6. Trim: Tile, and black and other colored marble trim.
7. Lighting: Electric.
8. Heating: Central heating plus molded brick fireplaces with round heads.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces west with the entrance porch at the southwest corner on a large level lot on the campus of the Norwich Free Academy.
2. Walks: Concrete walks.
3. Landscaping: Informal landscaping with lawn, shrubs,

and large trees. Large areas of the building are covered with ivy.

Prepared by Mrs. Ozias Dodge, Director  
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Osmund R. Overby, Architect  
National Park Service  
February 1961.

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